

The Project.....

All three units, maximum, intermediate and minimum security was involved in the project. Every client was given the opportunity to participate in the project. They were provided with the information on the project and told participation was strictly voluntary. They were given the opportunity to draw, write, or otherwise decorate a pillowcase in whatever way they felt would represent their struggle of living with a mental illness and/or developmental disability and their recovery.



Orville said the message of his pillowcase is very simple: "When it rains the flowers grow."

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Rex drew a cross, rose, sunflower and candles. He said the rose and sunflower represent religion and that each petal that falls off is sin. The candles show there can still be light in his life. He said, "Religion helps keep my daily life going."

The clients responded very positively to the opportunity to participate in the project. Seventy-one clients completed pillowcases. Their artwork is as varied and unique as the individuals themselves. Some wrote their own words, others copied a poem or prayer; still others drew their story or something symbolic of their journey. All are powerful works of art. It was remarkable how many clients came to the session to create their pillowcase art with a well thought out plan of what they wanted to share through their art and how they would accomplish that. Many brought meticulous drafts of what they would draw or write on the pillowcase. When asked, client after client could share the detailed explanation of how their artwork represented their individual story.